PAM.
MISC.

1561

Massachusetts Missionary
Society
Original Constitution
Address & List of Members
1799

Mass Miss So formed 1799 –
Mass Prospect Bonner Miss. So in 1818.

United 1827 –

Com. Home Miss Soc 1826

Mass Miss So
Incorporated
Mass Home Miss So Feb 5. 1844

Gaves elected
Trustee of Domestic Miss So 1822
Mass Miss So 1827 and
Every Year since
Minute uncertain 1820

217. 577. 25 Receipts Last year

Receipts 1826-7
20.031-21

TO ALL,
Who are desirous of the Spread of the Gospel of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Christian Brethren,

WISHING that grace, mercy, and peace may be abundantly multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we take the liberty to announce to you, that, impelled by a deep commiseration for the unhappy state of thousands, who are perishing through lack of those precious means of salvation which we enjoy; by a recollection of our solemn vows to devote ourselves faithfully to the good of the kingdom of our dear Redeemer; and by the imitable examples of many others, both in our own country and in Europe, who have nobly stepped forward in the cause of Zion; we, a number of ministers and people of Christ, convened in Boston, on Tuesday, May the 28th, in the year of our Lord 1799, for the purpose of attending to our duty in this regard, have deemed it expedient to form into a *Society*, in order to collect and combine our efforts, for the spread of the knowledge of the glorious Gospel of Christ among the poor Heathens, and in those remote parts of our country, in which the inhabitants do not enjoy the benefit of a Christian Ministry, and Christian ordinances.

That

That you may be the better acquainted with the nature and object of our Society, we ſhall take leave to preſent to your conſideration its Conſtitution, and a liſt of its exiſting Officers and Members.

The Conſtitution of the Society is as follows:

I. The Society ſhall be ſtyled, The *Maſſachuſetts Miſſionary Society*.

II. The object of the Society is, to diffuſe the knowledge of the Goſpel among the Heathens, as well as other people in the remote parts of our country, where Chriſt is ſeldom or never preached.

III. The Officers of the Society ſhall be, a Preſident, Secretary, Treaſurer, and ten Truſtees, choſen annually, by ballot.

IV. It ſhall be the duty of the Preſident to regulate the meetings of the Society, and *ex officio* to act as one of the board of Truſtees, ſix of whom ſhall conſtitute a quorum.

V. It ſhall be the duty of the Secretary, to keep accurate records of the Society, and exhibit them at every annual meeting.

VI. It ſhall be the duty of the Treaſurer, to receive the property of the Society, ariſing from entrance money, annual taxes, and donations; to anſwer the orders of the Truſtees, to keep a fair account of his proceedings, and exhibit it to the Society at every annual meeting.

VII. It ſhall be the ſpecial duty of the Truſtees, to examine candidates for the reſpective miſſions, to employ and direct the miſſionaries, and,

and, if expedient, to recal them. The Truſtees are alſo authorized to manage, and diſpoſe of the Society's property, and to tranſact all the concerns of the Society, which require attention, beween one annual meeting and another.

VIII. It is expected that the Truſtees hold, at leaſt, a ſemiannual meeting, that the Society may realize every advantage by their reaſonable and united attention. They ſhall alſo make report at the annual meetings, of the labour and ſucceſs of the miſſionaries, and exhibit a particular account of their own tranſactions.

IX. The Society ſhall meet annually at Boſton, the Tueſday preceding every General Election of Maſſachuſetts, at ten o'clock, A. M.

X. All queſtions before the Society, except thoſe which reſpect the amendment of the Conſtitution, ſhall be determined by a majority of the members preſent.

XI. It is the expectation of the Society, that the Truſtees employ no characters as Miſſionaries, except thoſe who exhibit credible evidence of being the ſubjects of ſpecial grace; and of that Chriſtian zeal, wiſdom, information, and diligence, which are adequate to the arduous work of Evangeliſts, in the moſt ſelf-denying circumſtances.

XII. Any perſon may become a member of the Society, by ſubſcribing the Conſtitution, and paying two dollars into the hands of the Treaſurer, for the uſe of the Society.

XIII. Every member ſhall be conſidered as retaining his membership, and obliged to pay two dollars annually into the Treaſury, until his

desire to discontinue his connection with the Society be properly expressed to the Secretary.

XIV. It is resolved, that though this Constitution be subject to any amendments, and improvements, which the Society shall judge proper to adopt; yet, that neither any amendment shall be accepted, except by the vote of two thirds of the members present, nor before the expiration of a year, after having been proposed to the Society at an annual meeting.

The names which have already been subscribed to this Constitution, are these:

David Sanford,
Daniel Hopkins,
Nathaniel Emmons,
Ezra Weld,
Samuel Niles,
Samuel Spring,
Joseph Barker,
John Crane,
Samuel Austin,
Joshua Spaulding,
Timothy Dickinson,
Jacob Norton,
Jonathan Strong,
Peter Sanborn,
John H. Stevens,
Paul Litchfield,
Eli Smith,
Samuel Mead,
Eliphalet Gillet,
Freegrace Raynolds,
Titus Theodore Barton,
Andrew Beattie,
Jonathan Powers,
Daniel Hardy, jun.
Charles Coffin, jun.
John Simpkins,
Isaac Tompkins,
John Wait,
Leonard Woods,
Elijah Parish,
Samuel Worcester,
Leonard Worcester,
George Odiorne,
Kendal Kitteredge,
Jedidiah Morse,
Nicholas Pike,
Calvin Park,
Jonathan Homer.

The

The Officers for the enſuing year, are as follows:

Rev. NATHANIEL EMMONS, D.D. *Preſident.*

Rev. SAMUEL AUSTIN, *Secretary.*

Deacon JOHN SIMPKINS, *Treaſurer.*

Reverend Meſſrs.

DAVID SANFORD,
DANIEL HOPKINS,
EZRA WELD,
SAMUEL SPRING,
JOSEPH BARKER,
SAMUEL NILES,
JOHN CRANE,
SAMUEL AUSTIN,
JONATHAN STRONG,
} Truſtees.

We beg permiſſion to obſerve to you, that the adoption of this Conſtitution, and the meaſures taken in the commencement of this Society, have been accompanied with ſuch peculiar ſmiles of Providence as awaken within us the moſt pleaſing hope that it will enjoy the divine benediction, and be greatly inſtrumental in diffuſing the greateſt of all bleſſings, the ſalvation of ſinners. To God's omnipotent care and grace we commit our efforts in this hope.

To exclude all miſconſtruction and prejudice, we ſolemnly declare, that it is totally foreign from our views, to weaken the evangelical influence of any ſociety of a ſimilar complexion already exiſting; that we renounce all party objects, and utterly refuſe to ſuffer any politi-

cal

cal intereſt or conſideration whatever to have place in the deſign or operations of the Society.

Having thus offered ourſelves as the Maſſachuſetts Miſſionary Society to your notice, we take leave to addreſs you on the vaſtly intereſting ſubject we have in view.

By thoſe who cordially ſubſcribe to the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, and candidly admit the leading doctrines which they contain, as all real Chriſtians muſt be ſuppoſed to do, it muſt be conceded, that the whole human race is in a ſtate of apoſtacy from God, under the curſe of his violated law, and expoſed to the eternal puniſhments of his government; that the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt is the adequate and the only medium of recovering loſt ſinners to God and happineſs; and that this Goſpel muſt be known, received, and obeyed, in order to the ſecurity of the unbounded good which it furniſheth to the miſerable tranſgreſſor; that the virtue and happineſs of mankind are really always in proportion to the influence which the Goſpel has upon them; that it is life from the dead to every believer; and that that glory of God, with which it is ſo largely predicted in the Scriptures, that the world ſhall ſhortly be filled, will eſſentially conſiſt in the univerſal and legitimate influence of this Goſpel. On theſe grounds evidently, the grand commiſſion, which Chriſt gave to his primitive diſciples, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Goſpel to every creature; he who believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he who believeth

believeth not, ſhall be damned," was delivered. On theſe grounds the apoſtles of the Lord exhibited all that fidelity and zeal, in obedience to this charge, which are related in the New-Teſtament; and on theſe grounds, zeal in every believer for the ſpread of Chriſtianity has an adequate ſanction.

With theſe conſiderations before your minds; with the periſhing, and therefore very compaſſionable ſtate of every impenitent ſinner; with your own immenſe indebtedneſs to redeeming grace, your ſolemn covenant vows, your accountability, and your hopes in view, be intreated to caſt the eye of attentive obſervation upon the condition of thouſands and millions of our guilty race, in other countries and our own, particularly among the Heathen tribes, and on the frontiers of the United States, forming a vaſt line of new ſettlements, peculiarly embarraſſed with reſpect to their religious intereſts by local circumſtances; and aſk, whether, when their danger is ſo great, when their ſpiritual wants are ſo urgent, when there is ſo much zeal on the part of wickedneſs, infidelity and atheiſm, counteracting the Goſpel, there be not reaſon for us to put forth every exertion, for the ſpread of that precious Goſpel, which is the grand charter of our eternal inheritance.

Have we not, dear Brethren, been too long and too deeply ſlumbering, with reſpect to our duty in this great affair? What ſhall we not be willing to do? What ſhall we not be willing to ſacrifice? Is not the intereſt of Chriſt

our

our intereſt? And have we, as his people, any thing to do but to promote it? May we not, then, hope that our inſtitution will meet with your warmeſt approbation; and that we ſhall have the benefit of your joint co-operations, your influence, your prayers? Will you become united to our Society? If this be inconvenient, will you not, as the Lord has furniſhed you with the means, open the hand of a generous charity, and contribute to the ſupport of the great object before us? As the ſtate of the world is, the utility of the Society will depend much, very much, upon its pecuniary means. The Society holds itſelf reſponſible for the moſt faithful appropriation of all monies, which may be contributed and forwarded to the Treaſurer, who will give receipts, and enter ſuch contributions on the accounts of the Society.

In a word, dear Brethren, we would ſecure your attention, your hearts, your prayers, your influence, your exertions and your pecuniary abilities, to the benevolent object we are purſuing.

That God may incline your hearts to that which is pleaſing to himſelf, and prepare us, with all the redeemed, for his coming and kingdom, is the fervent prayer of your brethren in Chriſt.

In behalf of the Society,
NATHANIEL EMMONS, Preſident.

Done in Boſton, May 28th, 1799.

Atteſt.
SAMUEL AUSTIN, Secretary.